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## THE WEEKLY REVIEW.

Several works and journals of notable merit have accumulated on our table during our absence. We shall endeavor to review them in succession, as our time will permit, and hope that the authors and publishers who have honored us with their attention, will not think ill of us if their turn comes later than has been expected.

Our venerable and old townsman and friend, the Rev. H. Wasserzug, of the North London Synagogue, has accomplished his work, "Schirei Mikdosch, Ancient and Modern Synagogue Music." It lies now before us in two elegantly executed large quarto volumes, comprising 143 synagogue tunes for Sabbath and festive occasions. Rev. H. Wasserzug (known by the appellation, "Der Lomser Chazan,") has been the chief cantor of our native city Vilna for a term of twelve years, and it was not without regret that he was permitted to follow the call to officiate before the North London Congregation. This is sufficient to show how highly he was esteemed by the largest congregation of Lithuania for his talent and qualifications as a cantor. The tunes, which he has composed to several synagogue prayers and hymns, have become popular as masterpieces of their kind, and it was sufficient for many a young chazan to be able to recite some of these tunes in order to obtain a respectable position. The compositions of Rev. H. Wasserzug are singularly sympathetic and natural in style. Being a good Hebrew scholar, our venerable friend understood it well to make the tunes suit the rhythm and meaning of the words of his texts. As to the musical merits of the "Schirei Mikdosch," we need only refer to the testimonials of G. Zarembo, the director of the St. Petersburg Conservatorium; F. Weber, the organist of the Chapel Royal, of London; Dr. H. Wylde, the principal of the London Academy of Music, and other such musical authorities, who praised them very highly. Our cantors of this country will find the "Schirei Mikdosch" a valuable source to draw from, for the religious services of their synagogues.

Messrs. Eldredge & Brother, of Philadelphia, have published the "Manuals for Teachers," a series of five small volumes, which had been prepared at the instance of the Literature Committee of the National Educational Society, of England, some time ago, and now "carefully revised and adapted to the wants of American teachers." The series of "manuals" comprises the following works: The Cultivation of the Senses; The Cultivation of the Memory; On the Use of Words; On Discipline, and On Class Teaching. The book on "The Cultivation of the Senses" is now before us, a neatly fitted out duo-decimo volume of about 100 pages. We have seen but few books which comprise within such a small compass, so much of useful information as this book does. It treats of the developments of the senses in a child in simple and comprehensive terms, and gives the teacher hints how to cultivate those senses in his pupil in order to make them susceptible for the good and for the beautiful as far as their respective capacities can reach. The book is a good manual, not only for pro-

fessional teachers, but also for parents, who are the natural teachers of their children. By a careful perusal of the same, many a parent will find a new world of ideas opened before him, as regards the mental constitution of his child, and many a doubt regarding the capacity and ability of the child may thus be solved. If the fact is taken into consideration, how fathers and mothers are proud to see the physical development of their children, the symmetry and form of limbs and features—how much greater a pride should they take in watching the mental development of their children, the aesthetic harmony of senses and ideas in its growth and tendencies! For such parents as would recognize their children by the faintest shadows which their bodies cast, but could not distinguish them one from the other by their modes of action, or styles of writing a letter, books like the "manuals" are of imperative necessity. Conscientious teachers and pedagogues will be thankful to the American publishers who have prepared for them those most useful manuals of their profession in such an attractive and handy style.

The Penn Monthly for July contains, beside a number of very thoughtful articles of political bearing, and a few good poems, an essay on "Humanity and Economy in War," by J. N. Burrit; and one on "The Language of Animals," by Edward Howland, which deserve a careful perusal. The author of the latter essay says:

"One of the results obtained by our modern methods of studying the phenomena of nature is seen in the rapidly growing conviction that the hypothesis of instinct, as a mysterious quality, differing wholly in character and function from reason, is inadequate to explain the evidences of mind which animals display. The difference which lies between them and ourselves is one of degree, rather than of kind. They display the germs of all emotions; they reason as we do; they learn from experience; they analyze and compare; they communicate with each other; but they do not seem to have such a power of synthesis as to enable them to arrive at general conclusions. That animals love and hate, no one who has ever observed them, even slightly, can doubt."

The London Athenæum notices Dr. Kohler's article on "Two Ancient Hebrew Songs," which has been published in the *Hebraica* of June. Alluding to Dr. Kohler's suggestion, that for the reading of *Sepher hay Yashar*, "The Book of the Righteous," *Sepher hay Yashir*, "the book beginning with the word *Yashir* should be substituted, (cf. Exod. xv., 1, Naheh xxi., 17,) our London contemporary says: "Perhaps *Sepher hash-Shir*: 'The Book of Song,' would be more correct." The *Athenæum*, it seems, has not fully appreciated Dr. Kohler's suggestion. The doctor's remark was perfectly in accord with the ancient custom to call books, or even chapters, by the words with which they commenced. Thus the books of the Pentateuch were called by the words with which they began: "B'reshith, Sh'moth," etc.; the books of the prophets were also called in this manner, and in the talmud we find that even the *parashoth*, or "Chapters of the Pentateuch," which were read as lessons on a Sabbath, were known by the words with which they commenced (*vide* Chagiga fol. 3, a.) Dr. Kohler's suggestion that *Sepher hay Yashar* may have been the appellation by which the Mosaic Song at the Sea (Exod. xv.) was known, and that *Yashir* might, therefore, be substituted for *Yashar*, because the "Song" begins with that word, is more plausible than *Sepher hash Shir*, as the *Athenæum* would have it.

*L'Univers Israélite* contends against the assertions of Mendelsohn, that Judaism is not a dogmatic religion, and that the word "faith" was unknown to the ancient Hebrews in the sense in which it is used at the present time. Quoting Mendelsohn's remarks on the subject from the second part of his famous work "Jerusalem," and agreeing with him in his "ideas on revelation and on miracles," which have been suggested also by J. J. Rousseau in his *Vicaire savoyard*, and in the *Lettres de la Montagne*, our French contemporary protests

against his conclusions as to belief and dogma. He says that if Mendelsohn had been right, even the three sublime principles of Judaism: absolute Monotheism, the unity and fraternity of mankind, and the responsibility of man for his deeds would have no foundation. Instead of being a spiritual religion *par excellence*, a religion of the heart and of the intelligence, Judaism would be only like a body without soul, like a cold and dry skeleton—an array of meaningless ceremonies of sterile ordinances; yes, a register of police regulations."

The Biblical teaching of monotheism is no more demonstrated than the ordinances of *shaatnes*, and if the latter is a dogma which can be dispensed with, why should not the former be considered as such?

The same contemporary reports:

"Mr. Moise Schwab advances fast with his French Translation of the Jerusalem Talmud. He has just brought out the last part of the section called *Zeraim*, which forms more than the fourth part of this Talmud. We are glad to state that the translator improves with his work, as he gradually becomes more acquainted with the difficult idiom of the Jerusalem Talmud. He, however, is not yet aware that the text is in many places so corrupt that it would be utterly impossible for a better Talmud scholar than M. Schwab to bring out yearly a volume of translation."

"M. Schwab has brought out in the last Fasciculus of the *Actes de Philologie*, a history of the vowel-points in Hebrew. The essay is a good compilation from previous articles and notes on the subject, but contains nothing new. On the other hand, M. Joseph Derenbourg, member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres, will shortly publish in the *Revue Critique* an original article on the same question."

*Hab-Boker Or*, a Hebrew journal published at Lemberg, contains an interesting article by A. S. Weissmann, "On Cremation, Investigated from the Bible and Talmud." The author comes to the conclusion that cremation was not uncommon among our ancestors of ancient times.

Mr. Joseph Simon, of Nimes, France, has published an interesting pamphlet, *L'Education et l'Instruction des Enfants chez les Anciens Juifs*. The intellectual and moral state of the Jews in the last century before the common era, is not only interesting for Jewish history, but also of importance for the earliest history of Christianity. Dr. Marcus has published lately a similar essay in German on "The Pedagogie in the Talmud." The French and German authors compete with one another.

Says the *Meadville Advance*:

"Has the radical any faith? Yes, and no. He has no faith in the systems on which salvation has been and is made to depend. He has faith in principle, in mind, in humanity, in the infinite possibilities of life, which unfold to our view in the orderly processes of development, we call progress. He has faith in reason, in righteousness, in love."

The Washington *Capital*, referring to the Sunday Question, writes on the subject:

"It is to be hoped that our Hebrew friends will not go too far in breaking down the distinctions between their race and our Christian races. We want a palpable reserve upon which to draw for men to keep our money honestly, do our trading fairly, and models to hold up before our children as examples of domestic purity and general good conduct. The fact is we have room in our poorhouses and prisons for Christians only, and the Jews had better keep to themselves. What a frightful thing it would be to have a Hebrew Christian Statesman? The thought threatens insanity. Let us desist."

"Insanity" is good, in as far as the writer is concerned.

## Editorial Correspondence.

NEW YORK, JULY 13 1879.

It is a pleasure for an editor to use once the capital "I" instead of the customary "we," which is not capital in the least. A Russian writer once said: "A person may be able to speak with pleasure, with warmth, aye, with enthusiasm, about many a subject, but with

relish one can speak only of himself." Thus while writing this, and being permitted to relish the use of the capital "I," I was tempted to imitate the illustrious example of my senior colleagues of the quill, to tell my readers how I have enjoyed myself on my trip to New York,—what impression this metropolis has made upon me, with the rapid transit above and the slowly moving conveyances beneath. It appears to me that it is in New York as in the history of our times, the higher classes of society move onward at a pace much faster than their fellow beings of the lower grades. But I am afraid to use metaphors, lest I fall into the same error as—our ministers in the pulpit.

Then I was sorry that I was not a politician, and did not hold to any party, and had no favorite candidate to puff up in all candor of an editorial correspondence. I could do it, indeed, for I have the illustrious example of great men before me. So also could I puff up my friends, praise my grandmother's culinary abilities, extol my second cousin's talents, and astonish the world with a most captivating description of my aunt's elder son's father-in-law's step-child. I would gain friends by this, I know it—but may heaven forgive me, I cannot write such things, out of respect for the readers of the JEWISH ADVANCE. I must, therefore, confine myself to subjects which may be of interest to the readers.

The delegates to the Convention have come and gone. Their voices were heard while they were here, the echo seems to vibrate in the air of many a sitting and drawing room in the city. If such conventions have no other purpose than rousing the people to a knowledge that something is going on, the object is not altogether a bad one. The *אורנו* of our ministerial greatness, the doubles and triads of rabbins of one and the same name, the artificial emotion, impertinent candor, sham scholarship, jarring eloquence, and most amiable "bragadocia" would have no chance at all, if it had not been for such conventions. How would Rev. Dr. Nix be able to express the profound thought that "the Sabbath question is a hard nut to crack," if it were not for the convention? Or how would the rabbin Nulle show himself before the world, if it were not for such assemblages? And the Bible was quoted, and medrashic and talmudical sentences recited—and the convention is over and the world moves on.

Having called on the Rev. Dr. Huebsch, on the first day of my arrival in New York, I found in the sitting room a veritable *הבלי נביאים* I mean an assemblage of rabbins. I have had the pleasure of imbibing wisdom on that occasion. The characters and learning of our rabbins can best be studied by meeting them in social communion at a private occasion. There one can see the difference between a rabbin who has pursued a regular course of studies, and the one who has not. The former talks sense, and does not err away from the subject of conversation; the latter quotes names of authors and of recent publications. I have found out on that occasion the clue to the inefficiency of our young ministers. It consists in beginning to study from the wrong side. Those young rabbins instead of beginning with the Bible, proceeding with the commentaries, talmud and medrashim, and advancing to the more recent philological and comparative theological researches, begin from the latter and go backward to the first by induction, or by the quotations which they find in the recent works. In this manner the criticism on ancient works is studied without any knowledge of the works themselves, the philological corrections of Hebrew texts, which are mere suggestions at their best, are learned without a knowledge of the texts themselves. Such scholars quote Brugsch, Bey, Max Muller, Herbert Spencer, and similar authorities, with remarkable exactness, but when they come to a passage of the Bible upon which those authorities treat, they know not the original construction thereof.

There is a third grade of rabbins, consisting of such men as do not study either backward or forward. They listen attentively to such debates, and smile a most significant approbation to everything one of their superiors utters, be it

a scholarly joke or a profound explanation. I love those fellows dearly, but the congregational "big men" love them too, or else we would not have them adorned with the cloth.

I had the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of two gentlemen who really confer credit on the rabbinical profession, at the house of Rev. Dr. Huebsch. The one was the Rev. Dr. Zirendorf, of Detroit, Mich., the other was the Rev. Dr. Machol, of Cleveland, Ohio. The latter was on a peculiar mission to the convention. His congregation had joined the Union as soon as it was started. Some time later the congregation found itself unable to work on with the Union, and sent in its resignation to the Board of Directors. The resignation was not taken notice of, and the congregation suspended at the next convention "for non-payment of dues." The congregation claim that the suspension was illegitimate, and that if this mistake would be corrected now it would join the Union again. But the Board of Directors would not recognize this claim. It would be desirable to hear what has become of the resignation which that congregation had sent in to the Board, and what were the reasons of the Board to sustain the suspension. Respectable congregations should not be treated in such a peremptory manner, and if they are willing to bear such a treatment, the other congregations belonging to the Union should raise their voices against it.

A Southern gentleman has made a speech before the convention, of which I was heartily ashamed. He represented the state of the Southern Israelites as the most degraded. He "begged, solicited and implored" in their behalf. Having lived in the South, and knowing the state of the Southern Jewish communities, I believe that the gentleman has displayed his eloquence on the subject quite gratuitously. It was needless for him to "implore" for religious assistance in behalf of the Southern communities, since there is more religious life and devotion there than in many large communities of the East and of the West. It was wrong on his part to represent the Southern Israelites as mean, selfish, and Mammon-worshipping individuals, since their generosity and enlightenment are established facts. Among the ninety-nine congregations reported at the Milwaukee convention as members of the Union, more than thirty are Southern congregations, and in proportion, new Southern congregations have joined the Union during the year. It was, moreover, wrong of the speaker to represent the prejudice of the Christians of the South against the Jews in such injudicious terms, as the political and social standing of the Southern Israelites speaks to the contrary.\* But what will not an irrational bent for speech-making prompt a man of ambition, a Rev. Dr. to say!

The luncheon-room was one of the principal features at the convention-hall. Thither the members and hangers-on repaired, to refresh themselves after they had been tired out by long speeches, and thence they issued forth invigorated, to hear new speeches. The scenes at the luncheon-room would deserve a lengthy description. There Mr. Busybee stood with a plate of victuals in one hand, a glass of lager in the other. Suddenly he saw a man pushing forward whom he was anxious to tell something. Half choked with the morsel in his mouth, he rushed forward to catch hold of his man. His beer is spilt on the coat of the Rev. Dr. who stood near him, the victuals drops on the coats of others, he slips—the man whom he wanted to see is pushed out of his reach by the busy crowd. Mr. Political came to the luncheon-room not to partake of the refreshments, but to say something to his friends. He marches about near the door; a nod, a smile, a hurried sentence, a tap on the shoulder, a twinkle with the eye, do the business for him. Rev. Dr. Homer has caught hold of Mr. Pan. The latter is thirsty and would give "a kingdom for a glass of beer." But Dr. Homer has made up his mind to have his say. He holds poor Pan by the button hole. Pan smiles politely, while his eyes turn wistfully toward the fountain of the refreshing liquid. The crowd rushes by and gets all the refreshments wanted. Pan sees and smiles vehemently, while the Rev. Dr. Homer talks into him with a relish.

\*We find that a New Orleans paper has taken up the subject, and has administered a vigorous and well-deserved rebuke to the "eloquent" speaker. We present the remarks of that journal in our German department, recommending it to the perusal of our readers.

(To be concluded.)